

REMARKS

Claims 1-43 are currently pending. Claims 1-13, 19-21, 23-25 and 30-43 stand withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 14 and 26 have been amended to correct minor grammatical and spelling errors and claims 30 and 31 have been amended for readability. No new matter has been added.

Restriction/Election Requirement

The Office Action includes an election of species requirement wherein the Examiner has alleged that the claims are directed to fourteen (14) species (embodiments) identified in the specification as corresponding to Figs. 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 respectively.

The Office Action further includes a restriction between product and process claims (Office Action at p. 4).

Election with Traverse

The Applicant hereby elects the product claims and the species corresponding to Fig. 16 (*i.e.*, Figs. 16a-16c) with traverse. It is believed that claims 14-18, 22, and 26-29 are readable on the elected species.

The election is made with traverse because the Office has not identified mutually exclusive characteristics that are found in different disclosed embodiments as required by MPEP § 806.04(f). As such, aside from making an assertion of mutual exclusivity, the Office has not identified details to form a proper basis for the restriction.

In addition, upon allowance of claim 14, the Applicant requests rejoinder of the withdrawn dependent claims that depend from claim 14, in particular claims 19-21, 23-25, and 30-31. The examiner has already indicated that should product claims be found allowable, the withdrawn process claims that depend from or require all of the limitations of

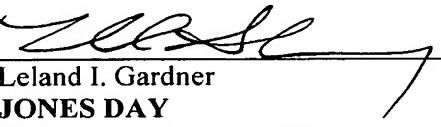
the allowable product claims may be rejoined. (Office Action, p. 4). Accordingly, upon allowance of claim 14, it is respectfully requested that dependent claims 19-21, 23-25, and 30-31 be rejoined and allowed.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, favorable examination of claims 14-18, 22, and 26-29 is respectfully requested. Should there be any questions in connection with this application, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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